AUM

You yourself must strive; Buddhas are but sign-posts.

—*The Dhammapada*

# THEOSOPHY

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## TEACHING AND APPLICATION

IN her article, "Our Three Objects" (published in *Lucifer* for September, 1889), H.P.B. briefly characterizes the true work of the Movement: "It is not in polemical pamphlets or sensational newspaper articles that its permanent record will be made, but in the visible realization of its original scheme of making a nucleus of universal brotherhood, reviving Oriental literature and philosophies, and aiding in the study of occult problems in physical and psychological science." The din of controversy, she said, including attack on the Founders, made it likely that the general public would "know Theosophy only as one half sees a dim shape through the dust of battle," making it important that students and workers for Theosophy keep in mind their primary tasks in fulfillment of the declared objects.

All of this article is of interest and value, but there is one statement in it deserving special attention. This is the declaration that all the successes of Theosophical work are due to "our recognition of the fact of the Higher Self—colourless, cosmopolitan, unsectarian, sexless, unworldly, altruistic—and the doing of our work on that basis." Explaining, H.P.B. said that the social differentiations resulting from physical evolutions and the external environment create barriers impervious to outside attack; these, she said, can be penetrated only by appeals to the human heart, to the intuition. The idea of the Higher Self, she implies, has dissolving power when it comes to these barriers. It brings a change in stance, the

capacity to look upon the field of experience from a higher level, and this alteration in outlook helps to remove old antipathies, making possible the spread of the idea of altruism and human brotherhood.

Evidently, an occult law is involved in this progressive awakening to the Self. Some measure of its potency may be gained from considering Mr. Judge's commentary on the seventh chapter of the *Bhagavad-Gita*—devoted, as he says, "to the question of that spiritual discernment by means of which the Supreme Spirit can be discerned in all things, and the absence of which causes a delusion constantly recurring, the producer of sorrow." Misconceptions of the One Self, he shows, are at the root of the self-identifying attachments which bind human beings to delusions and inadequate values. The archetypal delusion, he points out, is the personal-God idea, a fatal externalization of the Self present in the hearts of all beings. Humans subject to this belief "fall into error and darkness at the time of their birth because of the hold which former life-recollections have upon the mind." These now have the form of skandhic propensity, which shapes the new personality during its early development. Such aggregates of sensations and desires, being our own from a former existence, "rush to us and we to them, so that a new union is made for another lifetime." Mr. Judge continues:

> In the other life, not having viewed the Self as all and in all, and having worshipped many Gods, the sensations of liking and disliking are so strong that the darkness of rebirth is irresistible. But the wise man died out of his former life with a full knowledge of the Self at the hour of death, and thus prevented the imprinting upon his nature of a set of sensations and desires that would otherwise, upon reincarnation, lead him into error.

The difficulty most of us have in reading the *Gita* is in making applications of its wisdom to our own lives. The language of the *Gita* is both archaic and sublime. It breathes a level of awareness to which we hardly reach, except by occasional influx of intuition. Yet the very strength of its rhythms, the splendor of its imagery, and the vision of its prophetic passages—all this makes us feel that there are depths beyond depths of meaning in its pages. It was the special talent of Mr. Judge to draw parallels between the *Gita's* insight and our own capacity for understanding. One example of this is his discussion of the meaning of the quoted sentence: "Those who worship the Gods go to the Gods, and those who

worship me come unto me." Then follows a passage by Mr. Judge, made memorable by both lyric beauty and psychological verity:

> Man, made of thought, occupant only of many bodies from time to time, is eternally thinking. His chains are through thought, his release due to nothing else.

We might note the frequency with which study of Theosophy invites us to think about *thinking*. This may be among the highest occupations of the manasic principle. What self-knowledge we have been able to acquire may have become possible only through such conscious reflection, which is the first step in hindering the modifications of the thinking principle—the discipline Patanjali describes. Taking careful account of the themes of the "lifetime meditation" referred to in *The Ocean of Theosophy* would be a natural part of this quest for self-knowledge.

In his comment on the seventh discourse of the *Gita* (*Notes on the Bhagavad-Gita*, p. 141-42), Mr. Judge provides a treatise on the psychology of the imprisonment of the ego in ideas:

> His [Man's] mind is immediately tinted or altered by whatever object it is directed to. By this means the soul is enmeshed in the same thought or series of thoughts as is the mind. If the object be anything that is distinct from the Supreme Self then the mind is at once turned into that, becomes that, is tinted like that. This is one of the natural capacities of the mind. . . .
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> Now "the Gods" here represent not only the idols of idol-worshippers, but all the objects and desires people run after. For the idols are but the representatives of the desired object. But all these Gods are transitory. . . . The vain things which men fix their minds on and run after are of the most illusory and transitory character. So whether it be the imaginary Gods or the desires and objects the mind is fixed on, it—that is, those who thus act—has only a temporary reward because the object taken is in itself temporary. This is law and not sentiment. . . .
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> But those who worship or believe in the Self as all-in-all, not separate from any, supreme, the container, the whole, go to It, and, becoming It, know all because of its knowledge, and cease to be subject to change because It is changeless. This also is law, and not sentiment.

At the beginning of his comment on this chapter Mr. Judge makes it plain that self-knowledge is the most difficult of attainments, since it leads to the perfection of the Mahatma. Yet this is the goal, and it is within reach of all: "The superior nature can be known because it is in fact the Knower who resides in every

human being who has not degraded himself utterly." The achievement, however, depends upon joining the longing for perfection with the will to serve others. Earlier (in his Notes on chapter five), Mr. Judge has emphasized this requirement:

> "Effacement in the Supreme Spirit is gained by the right-seeing sage whose sins are exhausted, who hath cut asunder all doubts, whose senses and organs are under control, and *who is devoted to the well-being of all creatures.*"
>
> If the last qualification is absent, then he is not a "right-seeing sage" and cannot reach union with the Supreme. It must follow that the humblest imitator, every one who desires to come to that condition, must try to the best of his ability to imitate the sage who has succeeded. And such is the word of the Master; for He says in many places that, if we expect to have His help, we must apply ourselves to the work of helping humanity—to the extent of our ability. No more than this is demanded.

There is, we see, no moralizing in Theosophy. There is a call to that inner being—the one who knows, for he is knowledge—to take up the work upon which his heart was set, ages upon ages ago. There is a statement of the law, an explanation of its workings, and a reminder of the goal. Each one sets his own pace, formulates his own resolve, establishes his own conception of duty. Yet from the Teachers the hoping, aspiring, sometimes faltering ego gains unambiguous instruction in the principles of things, in the form of a doctrine or teaching which remains the same, century after century, millennium after millennium. There comes an ultimate moment in the long odyssey of every soul when the longing for self-knowledge begins to be paramount. And then that soul turns to the instructions which are available, searching their meaning with the intensity of dawning spiritual purpose. Theosophical students of the century now complete have had teachers of unparalleled insight and devotion to give them aid. In this brief review, we have seen how the fundamental realities of Theosophic achievement and growth were given clear statement by H.P.B., and how their applications in terms we are able to understand were provided by Mr. Judge.

# THREADS OF OCCULT SCIENCE

## X

HUMAN hybernation belongs to the Yoga system and may be termed one of its many results, but it cannot be called "Yoga." [I, p. 314.]

In reference to the arrest of the growth of the hair, some adepts in the secret science, which is generally known in India under the name of *Yoga,* claim to know something more than this. They prove their ability to completely suspend the functions of life each night during the hours intended for sleep. Life then is, so to say, held in total abeyance. The wear and tear of the inner as well as the outer organism being thus artificially arrested, and there being no possibility of waste, these men accumulate as much vital energy for use in their waking state as they would have lost in sleep during which state, if natural, the process of energy and expanse of force is still mechanically going on in the human body. In the induced state described, as in that of a deep swoon, the brain no more dreams than if it were dead. One century, if passed, would appear no longer than one second, for all perception of time is lost for him who is subjected to it. Nor do the hairs or nails grow under such circumstances, though they do for a certain time in a body actually dead, which proves if anything can, that the atoms and tissues of the physical body are held under conditions quite different from those of the state we call death. For, to use a physiological paradox, life in a dead animal organism is even more intensely active than it ever is in a living one, which as we see, does not hold good in the case under notice. Though the average skeptic may regard this statement as sheer nonsense, those who have experienced this in themselves know it is an undoubted fact. Two certain fakirs from Nepaul once agreed to try the experiment. One of them, previous to attempting the hybernation, underwent all the ceremonies of preparation . . . and took all the necessary precautions; the other simply threw himself by a process known to himself and others into that temporary state of complete paralysis, which imposes no limits of time, may last months as well as

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NOTE.—This collation of comments by H.P.B. is compiled from notes appearing in volumes I and II of the *Theosophist*, with sources given by volume and page.

hours, and which is known in certain Tibet lamaseries as . . . The result was that while the hair, beard, and nails of the former had grown at the end of six weeks, though feebly yet perceptibly, the cells of the latter had remained as closed and inactive as if he had been transformed for that lapse of time into a marble statue. Not having personally seen either of the two men, or the experiment, we can vouch only in a general way for the possibility of the phenomenon, not for the details of this peculiar case, though we would as soon doubt our existence as the truthfulness of those from whom we have the story. We only hope that among the skeptical and materialistic who may scoff, we may not find either people who, nevertheless accept with a firm and pious conviction the story of the resurrection of the half-decayed Lazarus and other like miracles, or yet those who, while ready to crush a theosophist for his beliefs, would never dare scoff at that of a Christian. [II, p. 146.]

This system, evolved by long ages of practice until it was brought to bear the above-described results, was not practised in India alone in the days of antiquity. The greatest philosophers of all countries sought to acquire these powers; and certainly, behind the external ridiculous postures of the Yogis of today, lies concealed the profound wisdom of the archaic ages; one that included among other things a perfect knowledge of what are now termed physiology and psychology. Ammonius Saccas, Porphyry, Proclus and others practised it in Egypt; and Greece and Rome did not shrink even at all in their time of philosophical glory, to follow suit. Pythagoras speaks of the celestial music of the spheres that one hears in hours of ecstacy; Zeno finds a wise man who having conquered all passions, feels happiness and emotion, but in the midst of torture. Plato advocates the man of meditation and likens his powers to those of the divinity; and we see the Christian ascetics themselves through a mere life of contemplation and self-torture acquire powers of levitation or aethrobacy, which, though attributed to the miraculous intervention of a personal God, are nevertheless real and the result of physiological changes in the human body. "The Yogi," says Patanjali, "will hear celestial sounds, the songs and conversations of celestial choirs. He will have the perception of their touch in their passage through the air,"—which translated into a more sober language means that the ascetic is enabled to see with the spiritual eye in the Astral Light, hear with the spiritual ear subjective sounds inaudible to others, and live and

feel, so to say, in the *Unseen Universe.*

"The Yogi is able to enter a dead or a living body by the path of the senses, and in this body to act as though it were his own." The "path of the senses"—our physical senses supposed to originate in the astral body, the ethereal counterpart of man, or the *jivatma*, which dies with the body—the senses are here meant in their spiritual sense—volition of the higher principle in man. The true Raj Yogi is a Stoic; and Kapila, who deals but with the latter—utterly rejecting the claim of the *Hatha* Yogis to converse during Samadhi with the *Infinite* Iswar—describes their state in the following words:—"To a Yogi, in whose mind all things are identified as spirit, what is infatuation? what is grief? He sees all things as one; he is destitute of affections; he neither rejoices in good nor is offended with evil. . . . A wise man sees so many false things in those which are called true, so much misery in what is called happiness, that he turns away with disgust. . . . He who in the body has obtained liberation (from the tyranny of the senses) is of no caste, of no sect, of no order, attends to no duties, adheres to no shastras, to no formulas, to no works of merit; he is beyond the reach of speech; he remains at a distance from all secular concerns; he has renounced the love and the knowledge of sensible objects; he flatters none, he honours none, he is not worshipped, he worships none; whether he practises and follows the customs of his fellowmen or not, this is his character."

And a selfish and a disgustingly misanthropical one this character would be, were it that for which the TRUE ADEPT would be striving. But, it must not be understood *literally* . . . [II, p. 75.]

# EVERYDAY OCCULTISM

WHAT, then, *is* matter and what is Spirit? This is the question of the ages, and the only answer known to mankind at large is what men accept as their religion and their science, whose fruits have ever been the same—"birth, death, decay, sickness, and error": the unending succession of the rise and fall of civilizations and religions. Arjuna represents the man of religion who has come to "the end of the trail." Students of the Wisdom-Religion in all ages have fallen victim to the same misconception that prevails in what are technically as well as popularly called religion and science. Ignorant of, or ignoring, the fundamental basis of *all* actions, spiritual and intellectual, as well as physical, they are deceived—that is, glamoured, *intoxicated,* by the results flowing from this or that system, belief, practice. Physical scientists are materialists in nearly every case; *why?* They have been able to obtain results by a study of Nature that they could not obtain by a study of Revelation. Religious people, educated or ignorant, believe in their God and their prayers, in spite of prevalent Materialism. Why? Because they *know* that they, too, get results that no amount of scientific knowledge can produce—happiness, "peace of mind," contentment with their fortune or misfortunes.

Their power of perception centered on the results achieved, neither scientist nor religionist is able to rise above the plane of effects and observe the sphere or world of causation pure and simple. Were that done, the scientist would be a materialist no longer, the religious man would be a sectarian no longer. The follower of any religion would soon see that the followers of every religion achieve the same results as his own, though their prayers are addressed to another God and their works based on another revelation. So with the scientist: he would soon see that whoever sets up a physical cause is bound to get a corresponding result, and this quite regardless of contradictory hypotheses as of contradictory revelations. Taking this simple universal truth into the region of

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NOTE.—This article is from a series of essays on the *Bhagavad-Gita* first printed in volume 15 of THEOSOPHY.

the metaphysical, both the religious and the scientifically minded man could easily verify the same apothegm—Like causes produce like results, whether in the world physical or the world metaphysical, the world spiritual or the world psychic. Behind any perceived world of effects lies its opposite pole, the world of causes. But behind both worlds lies a third and eternal world which includes and penetrates the others—that world which the religious man calls the Will of his God, the scientist calls Law, and the Krishnas of all time call "the Principles" of Nature and of Man—the world of Self-being. Because it is the world of the SELF or the One Life, that Spiritual Universe can never be perceived by the eye of sense, which perceives only effects and results; nor by the eye of reason or intellect, which perceives only *relations, i.e.,* cause-and-effect. The ignorant man sees effects dissociated from their causes, the more intelligent see a combination or concatenation or relation between the visible and the invisible, but our wisest men fail to see the *continuity* of the One Life, whether we divide it into visible Matter and invisible Energy, into Spirit and Soul, into Law or God.

All these mighty problems have been discussed by Krishna, not in a series of chapters or Discourses, as we read and study *Gita,* but in *continuity,* in unbroken sequence. From Principle to Principle of Nature and of Arjuna's own being he has united, elevated, the same SELF which before saw only good; then only evil; then only contradictions; then only a *Muni,* a Great Soul, who might be followed but never emulated—to the point where this self-same Arjuna can see for himself, in himself and in all Nature as well as in the Great Teacher, the *Superior* Nature, the "Knower in every mortal body." This is that "Eye of Wisdom" dwelt upon in the fifteenth chapter, but in the seventh called "Devotion by means of *Spiritual* Discernment." All men and all beings "animate or inanimate" have Discernment, the Divine Power of Perception. But if that Power is exercised through the "eye of sense"—the perception of physical results or cause-and-effect—the Self is limited by what it sees to what it sees, "earth, water, fire, air, and akasa." If that same power is elevated to the region of causality, if the "eye of reason" be employed as well as the eye of sense, then there results the perception of and limitation to "Manas, Buddhi, and Ahankara"—which, for present purposes we may take to mean the Personal consciousness of cause-and-effect, with ourselves as the experiencer, the victim or the beneficiary of our interactions with the rest of Nature. All this is the "inferior nature" of the SELF—that

is to say, *Human Nature*. We do not regard "ourselves" from the highest imaginable standpoint. Quite the contrary, we regard the highest imaginable presentment of Nature and Man, or of Spirit and Matter, from the standpoint of human nature.

The YOGA of Krishna or of Buddha or of Christ or of H.P.B. calls on us to regard human nature from the Divine plane, not Divine nature from the human plane. Raja Yoga is, therefore, reduced to terms, three sequential steps as an evolution, synthesized and symbolized by the development of the three "eyes" or instruments of perception—the eye of sense, the eye of reason, and the eye of wisdom, sometimes called the "Third Eye."

Once, we all had the eye of Wisdom and the eye of Reason—in other words we were in the state called Atma-Buddhi-Manas, the state of every Savior, every Mahatma. We "incarnated" in beings having only the "eye of sense"—in order that we might see Life through their eyes and that they might see Life through our eyes. To effect that *partial* Union, which is what "incarnation" means, we *had* to set aside the "Eye of Wisdom," in the same way that to produce an ordinary electric light the current itself has to be "stepped down" through a "transformer" to adapt it to the resistant strength of the light-bulb; otherwise the light-bulb, our animal body, would be destroyed by the impact. Thus "Ahankara," the false, *i.e.*, relative or isolated idea of Self, replaced the Absolute and Universal consciousness of SELF which is the meaning of Atma-Buddhi. This, for the time being, was spiritually our loss, but it was the gain of Nature below us in the evolutionary scale of progression, for "man" became a *human* instead of an animal being only. *We* gained the eye of sense; the "animal man" gained the eye of reason. Now, our task is to *re*-gain the "Eye of Wisdom" without losing either the eye of reason or the eye of sense. No Being is complete—perfected—until he becomes a Mahatma, "able to see, able to hear, able to stand" in all three worlds—the world spiritual, the world intellectual or psychic, and the world physical or astral.

This is to become consciously and uninterruptedly the KNOWER in any or every mortal body—to have found out for one's Self the continuity of consciousness or spirit. Few men, as yet, have reached that point in the cycle of existences where they are consciously striving for *perfection*, and who *will* struggle till they achieve it. Such are the Arjunas of mankind. And "amongst those so striving

perhaps a single one" in any given incarnation becomes Krishna-Arjuna instead of Arjuna-Krishna. For they mistake the opening of astral-perception, psychic-perception, for the opening of the "Eye of Wisdom"; in other words, their *Ahankara* has been transferred from the physical to the astral plane, with consequent enormous expansion of the purely Personal Ego. But medium or psychic, theologian or scientist, or the merely "ordinary man," each achieves whatever "results" are in the line of his faith, ideas and works.

All the arts—and artifices—of "human nature" in its manifold attempts to "reach perfection" by pulling down the Divine to the personal, the Spiritual to the psychic, have given us our religions, our sciences, our civilizations, with their mixtures of true and false, of good and evil, but they never have and they never will give us the "Eye of Wisdom."

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## The Evolution of Consciousness

The *Manasic*, or mind principle, is cosmic and universal. It is the creator of all forms, and the basis of all law in nature. Not so with consciousness. Consciousness is a condition of the monad as the result of embodiment in matter and the dwelling in a physical form. Self-consciousness, which from the animal plane looking upward is the beginning of perfection, from the divine plane looking downward is the perfection of selfishness and the curse of separateness. It is the "world of illusion" that man has created for himself. "Maya is the perceptive faculty of every Ego which considers itself a Unit, separate from and independent of the One Infinite and Eternal Sat or 'be-ness'." The "eternal pilgrim" must therefore mount higher, and flee from the plane of self-consciousness it has struggled so hard to reach.

—William Q. Judge

# THE STREAM OF THOUGHT AND QUERIES

I HAVE watched the stream of thought, the battalions of questions pouring along the channels that reach out from *The Path*, and am asked to put a few on these pages with some answers.

### What is Resignation?

*In what way are we to understand this word, as it is used, for instance, on page 35 of May* Path? *If it is used in a special sense, that should be made clear.*

This word was not used in a special sense. Theosophists should strive not to strain speech or specially allot terms. The English language has quite enough words to meet most of our present wants. The intention was to give the deepest meaning possible to the term. *Resignation* was used in the sense of a total mental resignation, not a mere appearance or pretence. We must do as commanded by Krishna, resign all interest in the event of things, and be able to say that any event whatever that comes to us is our just due. This is perfect resignation: it is difficult and yet easy to reach. We reach it by reflecting that the object of the soul is union with the Supreme Soul, and that all our desires grow out of our bodily nature alone. It is really the first step; as the author in the May *Path* said, it is the one seldom thought of by students.

### Is Karma Only Punishment?

Karma is action. The law of Karma operates to bring about rewards as well as punishment. The man who is now enjoying a life of ease and wealth has obtained it through Karma; the sage who has attained to great knowledge and power reached them through Karma; the disciple drinking the bitter drops from the cup of failure mixed the draught himself through Karma; Buddha's great disciple Magallana—greater than any other—was suddenly killed, apparently in the height of his usefulness, by robbers; it was Karma; the happy mother seeing all her children respected and virtuous dies the favorite of Karma, while her miserable sister living

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Note.—This article by William Q. Judge first appeared in the August and September, 1889, issues of the *Path*. The second part will be printed next month.

a life of shame in the same city curses God by her life because she knows not that it is Karma. The world itself rolls on in its orbit, carried further and further with the sun in his greater orbit, and grows old through the cycles, changes its appearance, and comes under laws and states of matter undreamed of by us: it is the Karma of the world; soon or late, even while revolving in its orbit, it will slowly move its poles and carry the cold band of ice to where now are summer scenes—the Karma of the world and its inhabitants.

How then shall Karma be applied only to reward or punishment, when its sweep is so vast, its power so tremendous?

### Pictures and Symbols in the Astral Light

*I have seen pictures and symbols of wonderful beauty in the Astral Light. A beautiful face surrounded with light . . . a head with wings which soon seemed to sink into my brain. Were these seen through the action of manas and buddhi?*

I do not think so. These beautiful things belong to a lower plane and are seen by several senses and departments of senses. Many different causes might have produced them. Today you might see the face of a woman or a child whom you will not meet for the next ten years and have never yet seen; or a long-forgotten and slightly-noticed object in the past of the present life may be suddenly opened to clairvoyant sight; again, there may be deeply laid in your nature mental deposits from long past lives, and these may tinge your visions. I cannot answer individual cases; such is the work of a vulgar fortune teller. Each one must with patience study his own experience through many years, carefully noting and verifying and eliminating as time goes on. Each person who has clairvoyance has his or her own special phase—and there are millions of phases; hence five separate clairvoyants may see five different pictures or symbols, all produced by one and the same cause; or four of them may see four different pictures while the fifth sees the result of a combination of his own with the other four phases.

### How did the Symbols get into the Astral Light?

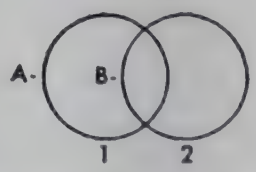
The world is so old that man's acts and thoughts for many millions of years have stamped the Astral Light full of pictures. But the Astral Light itself has cycles, tides, and changes, so those must be allowed for; it is useless to try to explain this, but in the chang-

ing of the cycles the symbols sometimes are mixed and interblended. When a class of elementals is fully developed and ready to run its appointed course from the beginning of an Age, there is a symbol for it that can be used until the complete decadence or extinction of that class, but at the change of certain cycles the symbol ceases to have power because that to which it once applied has altered and we know not the new symbol. You ask to know more about these symbols? It is not useful or necessary.

## ABOUT THE CYCLES

*I have heard and read much about cycles and their changes. I believe in cyclic law, and in the greater and lesser cycles, although I know them not. But are the cycles definite in limit, or are they shadowy?*

Much that has been said on this subject is vague except as regards the number of years included in certain cycles. The lunar cycle and some others are known, but it is well to clear up some of the shadows. Many persons think of one cycle beginning, say today, just as another has ended. This, however, is not correct, for the cycles overlap each other, and before one has really closed another has begun. The best way to understand it is to draw two circles intersecting each other thus:

Now No. 1 

is ending within No. 2.

Call the beginning of No. 2 at B, and it is seen that it had its inception while No. 1 was finishing. The real point of ending for one and commencement for the other is probably at a point found by drawing a line through where the circles touch at top and bottom, and let the spaces on either side of that line be called the dawn and twilight.

Then, again, there are some important cycles which begin and end wholly within the limits of larger ones, and, in fact, it is these smaller cycles that we notice most, for they are more quickly felt. All of this relates to physical cycles; there are others of a higher and more spiritual nature very difficult to trace and comprehend. It may be partially understood by any one who has observed a man working for several years at some occupation in itself not particularly elevating, but who at the end of the period has altered his

mental attitude in such a degree as to vastly change his entire life and development. In his case the occupation represented a cycle of debasement or expiation, and all the while another cycle of higher character was running its course in his mental and moral nature quite unknown to anyone else and perhaps also to himself. There are also great cosmic cycles that proceed slowly to our comprehension because they cover such stupendous periods, but they powerfully affect mankind and can only be faintly imagined by students.

The ancient Egyptian civilization illustrates the power of one of the greater cycles long since run down. That brilliant civilization rolled on through a vast stretch of years with no appearance of diminishing glory, but gradually the change took place.

We can imagine the hopeless and frantic efforts of her sages to counteract the decay. But they were powerless, and Egypt gradually sank to the place where we find her blazing in the records so far discovered and yet then in her decline; and at last all that remains are sand heaps and degraded ignorant Copts.

But the sweep of that mighty cycle merely moved on to other spheres, and when Earth again meets the same impulse the old civilization will return, the old force revive within a better body.

To me the cyclic laws are full of hope and eminently just.

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## Proverbs From Lucifer

As the bee, injuring not the flower, its color, or scent, flies away taking the nectar; so let the wise man dwell upon the earth.

Like a beautiful flower, full of color but without scent, the fine words of him who does not act accordingly are fruitless.

One may conquer a thousand thousand men in battle, but him who conquers himself alone is the greatest victor.

Never in this world does hatred cease by hatred; hatred ceases only by love. This is an old rule.

Not by birth does one become low caste, not by birth does one become a Brahman; by his actions alone a man becomes low caste, by his actions alone a man becomes a Brahman.

—*Lucifer,* 1890

# letters • questions • comment

*How can the soul be regarded as sexless, needing no "rights," and "unaffected by praise or blame," when it is constantly involved, psychologically as well as physically, in struggles for human rights in behalf of human beings in every condition of deprivation?*

The word soul has numerous meanings in Theosophical literature, depending on the context in which it is used. In *Answers to Questions on the Ocean of Theosophy,* Robert Crosbie says that the terms Divine, Animal, and Human are applied to the soul to identify the various degrees of acquired experience and intelligence. Then he amplifies:

> Spirit is universal. It cannot be said to belong to anything or anybody. It is like the air, universal and everywhere. It cannot know Itself except as Soul. Spirit is the "power to become"; Soul is "the becoming." Spirit is the power to see and know; Soul is the seeing and knowing. Soul is the accumulation of perceptions and experiences by means of which Spiritual Identity is realized.

This statement leads to recognition that amid the kaleidoscopic array of things we are drawn to identify with, there is an inner consciousness that is beyond the reach of all such modifications. This is the seat of discrimination—the ego which reaps experience through the efforts of the mind to comprehend what it perceives, and which harvests whatever meaning the mind can render into universal truth.

"Rights" is a term subject to much moral ambiguity. A great deal of social and political philosophy is concerned with the theory of human rights to possessions of one sort or another. It is easily seen that in a teaching concerned with the importance of freeing mankind from the attachment to "things," such political objectives will play only a subordinate part. As H.P.B. points out in the *Key,* "To seek to achieve political reforms before we have effected a reform in *human nature, is like putting new wine into old bottles.*" The goal of Theosophy is to make clear those conceptions of duty which arise from recognition of law, from appreciation of the meaning of Karma and Reincarnation. "Rights," in the light of these prin-

ciples, assume a much deeper meaning. The rights belonging to others, for which students may labor as they are able, are the rights to choose, to accept responsibility, to carry out duties chosen by the light of the understanding possessed, and to grow through experience to a better perception of the needs of all human beings. The conditions which enable such a life are the only true "rights" of souls in incarnation. It is as H.P.B. says:

> Now, true evolution teaches us that by altering the surroundings of the organism we can alter and improve the organism; and in the strictest sense this is true with regard to man. Every Theosophist, therefore, is bound to do his utmost to help on, by all the means in his power, every wise and well-considered social effort which has for its object the amelioration of the condition of the poor. Such efforts should be made with a view to their ultimate social emancipation, or the development of the sense of duty in those who now so often neglect it in nearly every relation of life.

*Analogy and correspondence are the keys to understanding theosophical doctrines. But how can one be sure that analogies are applied in a way that clarifies the principles of action, and not mechanically, as a formula?*

Analogy does not mean "sameness." Therefore, to be useful, an analogy should be universal enough to include wide variation without compromising the theme. The view of the universe as seven principled, for instance, derives both its continuity and its diversity from seven different ways of viewing the intelligence pervading all manifested being. It may seem at first glance that, concerning the after-death states, for example, we have no first-hand knowledge of them. But analogy and correspondence suggest that, in principle, the much shorter cycles of sleeping and waking, which our conscious memory *does* span, are models in miniature of those relating to life and death. It is entirely reasonable that the basic rhythms of existence should be recreated by the incarnating ego in whatever state it enters. Actually, the cycles of birth and death can be recognized everywhere in the undertakings of daily life. At the beginning of each new venture there is a period of gathering of forces, a time of apparent inactivity as the ego becomes accustomed to unfamiliar circumstances. Then there comes a time of involvement in the physical and psychological aspects of those conditions; and eventually a period when the man within comes to terms, in one way or another, with the prevailing conditions, after which the assembled forces exhaust themselves, giving way

to new combinations. There may also be emotional and mental accumulations recognizable as the "remains" of unresolved experience. There follow, too, the insights of assimilated experience possible only to the uninvolved Ego—whether through the acts of an awakened will, or through the circumstance of a relative "death" or wearing out of limitations. Through study of these cycles at first-hand in ourselves, we have opportunity to discover parallels to the larger passages of experience of the reincarnating Ego.

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## The Initiative of Brotherhood

It is to arouse man to an understanding of his own nature and to the right use of his powers that Theosophy has been brought to him again, as it has been brought in period after period by Those who are greater than we are—Those who have passed through the same stages we are now passing through—our Elder Brothers, the Christs of all times, the Divine Incarnations. It is They who come to remind us of our own natures; to remind us and to arouse us to action, so that what we really are may be known to us and expressed by us here on this lowest physical plane, on which we are working out our destiny—a destiny made by ourselves, a destiny which can only be changed by ourselves, by the very power of that Spirit which we are.

No one can know anything for another. Each one has to know for himself. Each one has to do his own learning. The object of Theosophy is to teach man what he is, to show man what he is, and to present to him the necessity of his knowing for himself. No vicarious atonement, no vicarious transmission of knowledge, is possible. But the direction in which knowledge lies may be pointed out; the steps which will lead us in that direction may be shown, as can be done only by those who have passed that way before. It is exactly what is being done. It is the course of all Saviors of humanity.

—*The Friendly Philosopher*

# WHAT BECOMES OF THOUGHTS?

IT has been said that "thoughts are things," an assertion with which I am prepared to agree entirely; and I also firmly believe that the time is not far off when their substantiality will be recognized and understood by science more fully than at present.

A thought implies many things besides pure force exerted. If force is exerted, then there must be that which exercises it. What is this, and what is the effect of the exercise? When we think, it is known that there is a disturbance or disintegration of the grey matter of the brain. But next we must observe that there is at the same time physiological disturbance, change, or alteration in the whole frame. For instance, a thought of shame or disaster or punishment may bring all over the body a hot flush or a cold shiver; the thought of a great danger just escaped has made men dizzy and women faint. Is there nothing in this? Further, each thought makes a picture, save perhaps a purely metaphysical syllogism, but even there it is difficult to escape the formulating by the mind of some concrete illustration as the syllogism proceeds; and even in pure mathematics it will be impossible for the thinker to prevent the rising up of a picture of the figures used in the operation, because from youth the numerals were impressed on his memory. Going on with this, we see that clairvoyants report that each thought makes a flash or picture objective to the inner sense, and from all the experiments in hypnotism we find that the old claim of occultism that each thought makes a definite picture must be true. Every clear seer will confirm this from personal experience. Still further, the astral light being a preserver of these pictures like a photographic plate, it follows that every thought has its picture preserved, and by that means what has been done or is being done may be known unerringly. Therefore thoughts, while they may be fugitive so far as concerns the thinker, are not so otherwise, but persist as seeds for good or evil in the whole race.

But, still more, every thought leaves a seed in the mind or manas of the thinker, no matter how fugitive the thought was. The whole sum of such small seeds will go to make up a larger seed for

thought, and thus constitute a man of this, that, or the other general character. Thoughts, then, are highly important, for, as the Buddha said, we are made up of thought and built of thought; as we think, so we act and will act, and as we act and think so will we suffer or rejoice, and the whole world with us.

—W.Q.J., *Theosophical Forum,* February, 1894

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## ARE BACILLI ANYTHING NEW?

Truly may one query in the words of Solomon: "Is there anything whereof it may be said: See, this is new!" Thus, it is to the modern discoverer and the proud patentee, that the wise words in *Ecclesiastes* apply: "The thing that hath been, *it is* that which shall be; that which is done, is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the Sun." Koch and Kochists, and all ye modern Attilas of that interesting creature called Microbe and Bacillus, and what not, down with your diminished heads, you are not its discoverers! Like as the heliocentric system was known thousands of years before the Christian era to be *rediscovered* by Galileo, so the invisible foreigners on which you are now making a raid, were known in dark antiquity. The infinitesimal insect you are insectating is spoken of by a Latin poet in the first century B. C. Just turn to the pages of P. Terentius Varro (39 B. C.; *Rerum Rusticarum* I, iii.) and see what the famous Atacinus says of your tubercular and other bacilli:—

"Small creatures, invisible to the eye, fill the atmosphere in marshy localities, and penetrating with the air breathed through the nose and mouth, into the human organism, cause thereby dangerous diseases."

Just so: *the thing that hath been, it is that which is.*

—*Lucifer,* 1891

# *on the lookout*

*Limited Use of Acupuncture*

In *Harper's* for November, 1974, George B. Leonard says that we have no language to help us understand the different levels of reality. The success of highly developed technology and scientific attainment has made us neglect other kinds of reality. But current troubles and discoveries together with more awareness of Eastern religions and culture have pressed new questions insistently upon the Western mind. Mr. Leonard makes the Western application of acupuncture an illustration of our deficiencies in thought and language. Confronted with the undeniable fact of its usefulness, Western science "did not ask how to use acupuncture, but how to explain it." We lack conceptual vocabulary for grasping Eastern conceptions of healing, and so limit our use of acupuncture to anesthesia.

*Being Instead of Competing*

A broadening of our linguistic resources, Mr. Leonard thinks, may be the key to future development:

> Changes in what we now so carelessly term "human nature" could make the necessary transformation to a non-expansionist society not only possible but desirable for the individual spirit. If *being* could become a focal subject for education and example, then there would be a chance that the need for adventure could shift from the arena of the expressway and the gun to that of the body and spirit. There would be a chance then that our children would value collaborative rather than competitive relationships, intrinsic joy rather than aggression, harmony with rather than exploitation of the natural world.

Mr. Leonard believes that the lack of adequate words for other states of consciousness prevents us from recognizing them as real and exploring them. He remarks that "the Tibetans have some 120 terms for different states of being," and that "Western culture, by depriving its individuals of a vocabulary of consciousness change, is exercising the most effective censorship possible over this type of experience."

*Sources in Classical Literature*

On the other hand, great poets convey their visions by using traditions that are widely familiar, if not fully understood, to their audience. This is how rich language serves in cultural reaching toward vision:

> At some point, the prudent novelist or poet connects his boldest adventuring to a well-known legend or a secure tradition. He anchors his words to the common rhythms and verities of the human experience. Thus he enlists unacknowledged and tireless coauthors. The Oedipus legend was already working upon Sophocles' audiences when they came to experience his particular rendering of it. The stern tradition of the seafaring life stands beside Melville on every page of *Moby Dick*. Browning's arrangement of the words, "Oh, to be in England/ Now that April's there," is a notable achievement but the work done by "England" and "April" is not inconsiderable.

*Anticipation of Need for New Words*

But what if we belong to a culture in which these terms or images have unknown meanings? How could we understand the poets without knowing their symbolic and linguistic resources, at least in part? Mr. Leonard wonders if the sudden proliferation of new terms and jargon represents rudimentary attempts to accommodate new sorts of psychological experiences. His speculation is sound in implication. The building of a Western vocabulary, especially in psychology, began in the eighteenth century with the work of Anton Mesmer. Students of H. P. Blavatsky know how she took his terms and raised them to a level of deeper meaning, using still other terms, revivals from the ancient Sanskrit, to open the Western mind to states of consciousness needing to be understood.

*No Experts Required*

The work of our best writers of today seems directed to similar ends. Theodore Roszak makes much use of William Blake to point to the possibilities of heightened awareness. Blake, he points out, wrote of four levels of vision, ranging from the merely "physical" vision of Newton's theories to a wholeness of perception which includes all planes and realities. In *Where the Wasteland Ends*, Roszak suggests that we cut ourselves off from a wider consciousness by supposing that what we see in sleep, in dreaming, is entirely "unreal":

> Last night, as on all the nights of your life, you dreamed much and magnificently, moving in an alternative reality of your own invention whose imaginative magnitude (for all you know) may have rivaled the creations of Homer and Shakespeare. Yet there are many people who would insist that their nights were wholly dreamless, if there did not exist behavioral evidence—electronically calibrated and recorded—to show them otherwise. Strange, is it not, that even in such matters we should need to invoke the authority of experts . . . as if our very dreams were not our own?
>
> . . . sleep is not mere relaxation; not mere *un*consciousness either, but a rich dream life that spirals down through ever deeper levels of the dark mind. . . . An hour after we awake, for most of us the dreams are gone and today has blended into yesterday without interruption or distraction.
>
> It requires a nimble attentiveness during just that first crucial interval of the morning—but if the effort is successful, one gains from it a sense of how reluctantly the dark mind slides away from us . . . as if it had more to tell, as if it were not ready to surrender our attention and would call us back. And what we then take away into the waking world can be a distressing sense of mutilation.

*Language of the Soul*

The reality of a wider consciousness is not in some far-off time or place, but within every human being, now. But we need first carefully developed ideas about other states and planes, lest words alone give currency to dwarfed understandings or caricatures of meaning. In the *Friendly Philosopher,* Robert Crosbie speaks of the "Language of the Soul" as arising from consciousness of the continuity that *is* the spirit in man, consisting of the wisdom acquired from all experience of the soul. He suggests that it has highest embodiment in comprehension of the correlations of sound and color, and in the arts, music, and literature.

*The Harmonies of Nature*

A new edition of Herbert Read's *Education Through Art* (Pantheon Books) is the occasion for a review in the *Nation* (Oct. 12, 1974) by George Woodcock. Read, Mr. Woodcock says, hoped to provide a method of education that would awaken the mind to the rhythms and proportions in the physical universe. Associating these natural harmonies with an ideal "good" in the Platonic sense, he wanted to make them the basis of social harmony and personal integration. Read believed that even liberal educators lack a strong sense of purpose, that freedom of expression is not sufficient to

generate change in individual lives or society. He attributed this weakness to ignorance of the nature of growth. He believed that the answer lay in educating, through art, the æsthetic sensibility toward the objective of a free society.

*Aesthetics Not Enough*

To be developed are those "inner means of perception upon which consciousness, and ultimately the intelligence and judgment of the individual, are based." Read goes on to say:

> It is only in so far as these senses are brought into harmonious and habitual relationship with the external world that an integrated personality is built up. Without such integration we get, not only the psychologically unbalanced types familiar to the psychiatrist, but what is even more disastrous from the point of view of the general good, those arbitrary systems of thought, dogmatic or rationalistic in origin, which seek in despite of the natural facts to impose a logical or an intellectual pattern on the world or organic life.

A noticeable omission in Read's theories is his neglect of the will as a factor in human evolution. He seems to think that if men can be taught to recognize the excellences and harmonics of the natural environment, they will respond by making the needed self-reforms. But more is required for this than cosmic geometry. His book nonetheless shows that the inherent order existing in nature is not mechanistic in character.

*"A Reality We Can Count On"?*

The modern scientific achievement of dissolving atoms into foci of energy, then the conversion of energy into equations, and finally the identification of equations with ideas in scientific minds has begun to renew the old question of what is "real." A recent experiment with kittens, showing how differently they could be made to see the same "reality," led Albert Rosenfeld, science editor of *Saturday Review/World,* to record some musings on the question:

> Through the centuries philosophers have grappled with the problem of a reality we can count on—the "something-I-know-not-what" that John Locke was sure must underlie our perceptions. Or could reality be, as Bishop Berkeley argued, merely an idea in the mind of God? If a hypnotist can put 10 people into a trance simultaneously and suggest to them an event—thus making it real for them, even though we "know" it "didn't really happen"—why couldn't an omnipotent mind, if one existed,

similarly impose its own reality on the minds of a whole population or of a whole species?

*Delusive Influences*

Mr. Rosenfeld's speculations are not nearly so fanciful as they may sound. Books on the madness of crowds illustrate how quite large populations can be made to do ridiculous and sometimes horrible things, under a false impression of "reality," and we know that the anti-human delusions spread by political propaganda have made it possible for entire nations to tolerate murderous policies by their governments over periods lasting for years. An "omnipotent mind" is not required for such things to happen, but only—one may suspect—a focusing and outpouring of the malevolent influences that have been accumulating in the astral atmosphere, in consequence of a general moral indifference. While the Astral Light, Madame Blavatsky says in "Psychic and Noetic Action," enables us to become active entities on this plane, it is necessary to get rid of the blinding and deceptive influence it produces in our psychic nature in order to perceive correctly and think clearly.

*The Senses Mislead*

Yet even in simple physical terms, there are problems of perception. Mr. Rosenfeld continues:

> We do of course realize, even if only by analogy, that perception has limits. We know that the mole and the dragonfly see a different world from the one we see. (They may not see at all, in the strict human sense.) We know, too, that reality exists beyond the reach of our senses—sound waves past the threshold of our audibility, electromagnetic radiations stretching far on both sides of the narrow spectral slit visible to our eyes.
>
> We also recognize that we can't always accept the evidence of our senses. To us, the earth appears flat; the stars are pinpoints of light fixed on the dark roof of night; a rock is a dense, motionless solid rather than mostly empty space sparsely populated by dancing atoms, seemingly "at rest" on a round, unresting earth, itself a speck of cosmic dust lost in the unimaginable vastness of galaxies in non-stop flight.
>
> "What is reality?" is then, a question difficult to answer in any absolute way. On a commonsense, everyday level, we don't usually need to trouble ourselves with such abstruse considerations. As a practical matter, we settle for what our senses report —as long as the senses of others report the same things. Ordinary reality, then, is consensual reality—reality by consensus.

*"Consensual Science"*

This sort of philosophizing is generally useful, since it formulates at a popular level the conclusions about "scientific reality" which have been slowly developing for the past twenty-five or fifty years. Actually, not since the Copernican revolution has it been possible to assert that physical reality is what we "see." How we see whatever it is that we see determines vulgar opinions about things and reality, which must then be corrected by a more comprehensive understanding of the working of natural law, made possible by reason. All the writing and talk, in recent years, about the importance of "the subject," about the prior reality of inner thoughts and feelings, is a part of the awakening to the hidden side of the universe which Mr. Rosenfeld is hinting at under the rubric of "reality." Scientific definitions, as he shows, deal only with "consensual reality"—they are the report of the "reasoned" and agreed-upon conclusions of a number of specially trained investigators about what they perceive through their five senses. With other senses, and another sort of reasoning, the definitions would be quite different.

*Matter Defined*

It is of interest to note what *The Secret Doctrine* has to say on the question of perception, anticipating by more than three quarters of a century the recognitions summarized by the *SR/W* science editor. In the section, "Primordial Substance and Divine Thought," H.P.B. wrote in 1888:

> . . . it is only through some molecular aggregation or fabric that Spirit wells up in a stream of individual or sub-conscious subjectivity. And as Matter existing apart from perception is a mere abstraction, both of these aspects of the ABSOLUTE—Cosmic Substance and Cosmic Ideation—are mutually inter-dependent. In strict accuracy—to avoid confusion and misconception —the term "Matter" ought to be applied to the aggregate of objects of possible perception, and "Substance" to *noumena;* for inasmuch as the phenomena of *our* plane are are creation of the perceiving Ego—the modifications of its own subjectivity—all the "states of matter representing the aggregate of perceived objects" can have but a relative and purely phenomenal existence for the children of our plane. (I, 329.)

*Changing "Reality"*

Notice that in this parallel between statements in the *SR/W* article and *Secret Doctrine* passages, what the *S.D.* terms Matter

the *SR/W* calls "Reality." This is fundamentally the outlook of modern science. It looks for reality in *things,* in matter, in objects. But these, as H.P.B. makes plain, are not and cannot be "reality." The reality of even the manifested world must be sought in what she terms *noumena*—"things-in-themselves"—and these cannot be made objects of perception until we learn how to divorce our sight from the thraldom of the senses, and to look upon the world of causes with an inner eye.

In another place in *The Secret Doctrine* we are afforded an explanation of the attitude toward "reality" maintained by scientists, as well as by the great majority of our time:

> Whatever plane our consciousness may be acting in, both we and the things belonging to that plane are, for the time being, our only realities. As we rise in the scale of development we perceive that during the stages through which we have passed we mistook shadows for realities, and the upward progress of the Ego is a series of progressive awakenings, each advance bringing with it the idea that now, at last, we have reached "reality"; but only when we shall have reached the absolute Consciousness, and blended our own with it, shall we be free from the delusions produced by Maya. (I, 40.)

*Mechanized "Thinking"*

"Computers," declares Fred Hapgood in the August, 1974 *Atlantic,* "Aren't So Smart, After All." Having explained why the performance of computers is so impressive in some ways, causing people to suppose that this Artificial Intelligence (AI—which Hapgood doesn't regard as intelligence at all) may rival and even outrun human capacity, he says:

> Some of the activities that are important to us and our sense of being human could, can, and might be programmed; others cannot. To take the extreme case, there is simply no serious sense in which one can talk about a computer praying or loving. If it continues to be true that to mechanize an activity is to divest it of its *mana,* to cause humans to withdraw from it emotionally, then the impact of these programs, at least culturally, will be to refine our ideas of human intelligence, to cause these ideas to recede, or advance, into the subjective, affective, expressive regions of our nature. If this happens, we might lose interest in the whole issue of whether machines can "outthink" man, and the use of the term "intelligence" by AI researchers may come to seem increasingly anachronistic and inappropriate the more successful they are.

*Issue of Free-Will*

The distinction made here, broadly speaking, is the same as that made between higher and lower Manas. It seems evident that computers extend to an astonishing degree of complexity the mathematical or logical skill of lower manas—which is essentially technique or mechanistic process, yet having in it all the wonder of a vastly intricate machine. But those enterprises of mind which depend upon feeling and will (true prayer is will) can have no relation to computer operations. Yet the computer experts, according to Mr. Hapgood, seem either unaware of or resistant to this law of conscious being:

> The essence of the free-will dilemma is that it seems impossible for something to be free and undetermined without its being indeterminable as well. It appears to be a contradiction in terms to imagine such a decision-making ability being reduced to a series of predictable, cause-and-effect regularities. But postulating such an ability means postulating something that is, in scientific terms, inherently incomprehensible. This paradox has never been adequately resolved—Karl Popper called it a nightmare—and it is something of a philosophical running sore to those with a scientific temperament. But few groups of scientists must confront this issue more directly than AI researchers. It is understandably repugnant to them to believe that there lies at the core of their chosen subject some impenetrable mystery, some vitalistic, unknowable spirit thing, a "ghost in the machine." They do not believe this; they understand intelligence as an aggregation of enormously complex abilities which interact in ways even more complex but which are both, abilities and interactions, creatures of natural law.

*Two Levels of Thought*

Again, the parallel with lower or Kama Manas applies. In "Psychic and Noetic Action," an article in some respects a treatise on free-will, H. P. Blavatsky says that whenever the mind "disconnects itself, for the time being, with *kama,*" it becomes "the guide of the highest mental faculties, and is the organ of free-will in physical man." Another of her comments—in "Dialogues between the Two Editors" (On Astral Bodies)—gives further light:

> The mind is dual in its potentiality: it is physical and metaphysical. The higher part of the mind is connected with the spiritual soul or Buddhi, the lower with the animal soul, the Kama principle. There are persons who never think with the higher faculties of their mind at all; those who do so are the minority and are thus, in a way, *beyond,* if not above, the av-

> erage of human kind. These will think even upon ordinary matters on that *higher* plane. The idiosyncrasy of the person determines in which "principle" of the mind the thinking is done, as also the faculties of a preceding life, and sometimes the heredity of the physical. That is why it is so very difficult for a materialist—the metaphysical portion of whose brain is almost atrophied—to raise himself, or for one who is naturally spiritually minded, to descend to the level of the matter-of-fact vulgar thought. Optimism and pessimism depend on it also in a large measure.

An understanding of the occult psychology provided in these two articles would go far in explaining the puzzles and dilemmas of those who try to compare or contrast the feats of computers with human intelligence. Mr. Hapgood probably does as well as one can without knowledge of the psychic and noetic principles in man.

*"Psychic Junkman"*

The world of literature highly esteems the modern "classic" by James Joyce, *Ulysses*. Students of H.P.B. are sometimes puzzled by the admiration it has generated, through the years. A thoughtful discussion of this work by Saul Bellow, in *Harper's* for August, helps to relate its strange qualities to psychological principles. Bloom, Joyce's chief character, moves aimlessly about in the network of association of lower mind. Bloom is a motiveless man from the egoic point of view. "Joyce," says Bellow, "is the greatest psychic junkman of our age." His account of Bloom's collection of psychic junk is microscopic and encyclopedic:

> With so much knowledge we are close to chaos. For what are we to do with such a burden of information. Leopold Bloom lies submerged in an ocean of random facts—textbook tags, items of news, bits of history, slogans, clichés, ditties, operatic arias, saws and jokes, scraps of popular science, and a great volume of superstitions. . . . The debris of learning, epic, faith and enlightenment pour over him. In this circumambient ocean, he seems at all times to dwell like a coelenterate or a sponge. . .

*He Drifts and Drifts*

> It is the absence of a story that makes Bloom what he is. By injecting him with purpose a story would put the world in order and concentrate his mind. . . . No, the plan of Bloom's life is to be planless. He palpitates among the phenomena and moves vaguely toward resolution. Oh, he gets there, but *there* is a region, not a point. At one of the low hours of his day he thinks, "Nothing is anything." He feels his servitude to the conditions

> of being. When there is no story those conditions have it all their own way and one is delivered to despair. The artifact civilization, Joyce seems to tell us, atrophies the will. The stream of consciousness flows full and wide through the will-less. The romantic heroes of powerful will, the Rastignacs [in Balzac] and Raskolnikovs [in Dostoevski] are gone. The truth of the present day is in the little Blooms whose wills offer no hindrance to the stream of consciousness. . . .

*"Artifact Civilization"*

This seems a fairly accurate account of what Joyce was about—portraying, in endless detail, the stream of consciousness in the psychic nature, the flips and random turnings of attention according to the attractions and repulsions of lower manas. Joyce, one may say, learned well how to describe this wandering of personal awareness—his work is a *tour de force* in describing a humanly aimless condition. He shows man as he may sink to the psychic floor of his existence, without a purpose, devoid of plan. Bloom, Saul Bellow suggests, is the natural product of an "artifact civilization." It is a civilization which H.P.B., many years ago, called "the Death of Art and Beauty." Bellow seems to have a similar view. "What you feel reading Ulysses today is the extent to which a modern society imposes itself upon everyone."

*No Proper Story*

Speaking of the messages of the media, the contents of the news magazines, Bellows says:

> This is the week's record of everything of substance relating to the human species. It is about us, our hope for survival, our common destiny. Is it, now? Does this really speak to my condition? Is this mankind, it is me, heart, soul and destiny? No, the nominally central individual studying the record does not feel central. On the contrary he feels peculiarly contentless in his public aspect, lacking in substance and without a proper story. A proper story would express his intuition that his own existence is peculiarly significant.

So far as the surrounding culture is concerned, its arts and literature, he finds no proper story. So Joyce set out to tell the empty story of the man without a story. He made an exquisite record of what rushes in to fill the emptiness of a man without a story, without a life of his own. This, at any rate, is a way of understanding Joyce. Mr. Bellow's *Harper's* essay is clarifying, though we may

not, in consequence, admire Joyce and wish to read him again, or even once.

*Lessons in Biology*

In a recent interview with a reporter for the *Los Angeles Times* (Dec. 1, 1974), Paul Dayton of the Scripps Institute of Oceanography (San Diego) spoke of the great influence one species exerts upon its neighbors, man being the most influential of all in his effects on other forms of life. Mr. Dayton regards this interrelation of species as a distinct evolutionary force. Ecology, he maintains, must become a more fully developed science, which involves the study of plants and animals as independent lines of evolution, and not only in terms of their utility to humans. Following is a condensation of the *Times* report of his views:

> The first thing serious ecologists must recognize is that every species of plant and animal has an evolutionary effect on the other species with which it comes in contact.
>
> Some of these evolutionary interactions are so obscure they cannot properly be described but no matter how trivial they may appear to be, it can never be assumed they are unimportant.
>
> Some species that seem to be unimportant members of ecological communities like the chaparral, the forest, the kelp bed or the meadow may actually play a vital role in the stability and survival of those communities.

*Disruption and Extinction*

Mr. Dayton's own work is in the control of pests by their natural enemies, without the use of pesticides. His exploration of how species affect one another's evolution reflects this experience:

> If a species perishes as a result of man's pollutants, the community is drastically altered. But if a species is favored by nutrients in waste water, to give just one example, the same kind of disruption of natural communities results.
>
> Man selects by destroying habitats, such as estuaries, lakes and fields turned over to commercial purposes. . . .
>
> Dayton said man also selects by agriculture, creating single species of crop plants, such as corn, rice or wheat, that have some special attribute man wants to encourage.
>
> "This almost always excludes and perhaps extinguishes other species that have existed throughout evolution and which have contributed to the evolution of the species preferred by man."
>
> "When natural selective pressures are removed the favored

species lose their inherited defenses against diseases and insect enemies," he said.

They thus often become more susceptible to these attacks, and this leads to increased reliance on chemical poisons and fertilizers, themselves a hazardous interference in the natural condition.

Dayton said nobody can assess damage caused by human selections like these without understanding the roles played in their ecological communities by the species that are man's targets.

"In extinguishing a species that may appear unimportant, man may extinguish a key species that stabilizes a community of thousands of species," he said.

*The Hidden Relationship*

There is much food for thought here, especially in relation t the biological interdependence of man and the kingdoms of nature One sees how short-sighted adoption of narrow efficiencies in th interest of greater "production" works against the very surviva methods of nature, precipitating difficult problems for man in rela tion to his food supply. While man's habit of regarding nature's re sources as no more than a handy larder for the satisfaction of hi needs and appetites, and his indifference to the extinction of rar species of birds and mammals are reflections of a basic selfishnes and ignorance that must eventually be overcome, a purely biologi cal view of these complex matters cannot include the larger issue of organic evolution. Species may become extinct for other reason —because, for one thing, the inhabiting psychic intelligence ha found it beneficial to move on to other and perhaps higher forms It is difficult to regret the extinction of the dinosaur and certai other large animals of long-past ages. But if the kind of understand ing that Prof. Dayton seeks were to become more common, it seem likely that there would also be gradual restoration of ancien knowledge about the subtler relations between man and the king doms, including the beginnings of an appreciation of man's rol as the agent of psychic and soul-development for all nature (see *The Ocean of Theosophy*, chap. VIII).